

COMMUNITY CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

1860

1. NAME

Historic Flatiron Building

and/or Common Van's BB Furniture

2. LOCATION

Street & Number

1311-1319 Bay Street

UTM References:

Zone

10

Easting

5538260

Northing

5339780

not for publication

City, Town

Bellingham

- vicinity of

Downtown

State

Washington

County

Whatcom

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership: public private bothStatus: occupied unoccupied work in progressPresent Use: agriculture commercial educational entertainment government
industrial military museum park private residence
religious scientific transportation other:

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Name City of Bellingham

Street & Number

210 Lottie Street

City, Town

Bellingham

- vicinity of

State

WA

5. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

An Illustrated Inventory of Bellingham Buildings 1852-1915,
by Daniel E. Turbeville III

6. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title

Michael Sullivan

Preservation Planner

Organization

Whatcom County Parks and Recreation Board

Date

Sept. 5, 1980

Street & Number

2600 Sunset Drive

Telephone 733-1231

City or Town

Bellingham

State

Washington

7. DESCRIPTION

Condition: excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed
Circle one: unaltered altered
Circle one: original site moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance
attach photo

The Flatiron Building has been a Bellingham landmark for almost seventy years. It was one of the first reinforced concrete buildings in the city, and until 1926 was also the tallest. Two elevators connected the building's six floors and full basement. The floors are built over wood joists on concrete beams, which are in turn supported by heavy concrete pilasters, while the interior of each floor is divided into rooms by eight inch thick curtain walls. On April 28, 1924 the Flatiron Building burned despite its internal water piping system and fireproofed varnish room. As a result a large water tank was mounted on the roof of the building and an automatic sprinkler system was added.

Verbal boundary description:

Acreage:

Town of New Whatcom Block 7 Lots 12 & 13

8. SIGNIFICANCE

Specific dates 1907-1908 Builder/Architect

a. History

Erected at a cost of over \$100,000, the Flatiron Building was built for Bellingham Bay Furniture Co. One of the city's oldest furniture firms, Bellingham Bay Furniture was founded in 1889 by T.S. Hamilton. It was first located in the old Bellingham Hotel, and later at 217-219 W.Holly. B.B.Furniture moved into the building after its 1908 completion, and it has remained there ever since. During the early part of this century the company was one of the largest and best known on Puget Sound.

b. Evaluation of Significance



B. & B. Building — 1907

1311-1319 Bay Street

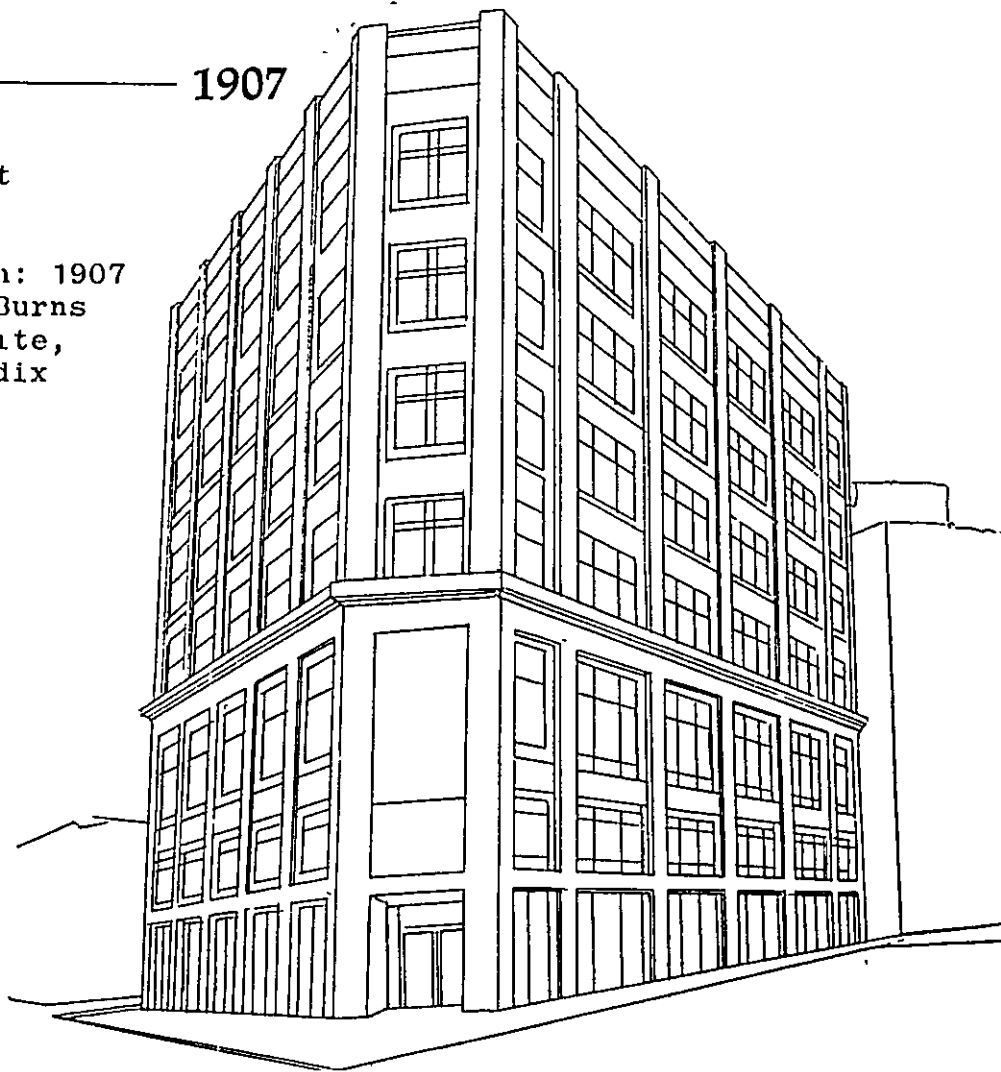
UTM References:

Z10E538250N5399800

Date of Construction: 1907

Architect: Frank C Burns

National Register Site,
Nomination in Appendix



Description:

The Flatiron Building is a seven-story detached commercial building, triangular in plan, with a full basement extended beyond the walls on all sides. The foundation and walls below grade are Chuckanut sandstone. The rest of the structure's piers, columns, and girders are reinforced concrete. It has been established that the building is one of the Pacific Northwest's first commercial examples of reinforced concrete construction. A more complete technical description of the site is included in the appendix.

Significance:

The Flatiron Building is significant as an early example of reinforced concrete construction. It is also a central skyline element in the downtown and for many years was the city's tallest building. See Nomination in appendix.